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President: Mr. Ping ..... (Gabon)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda items 45 and 55 *(continued)*

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Report of the Secretary-General (A/59/2005)

Mr. Menon (Singapore): Mr. President, the Singapore delegation would like to thank you once again for leading this effort towards the 2005 summit, including organizing this series of meetings to discuss the report of the Secretary-General as a whole and then in clusters.

My delegation would like to congratulate Assistant Secretary-General Robert Orr and his team for their excellent work in putting together the important report before us. Theirs was a daunting task, because much had already been said in the two major reports that the membership of the United Nations had spent much time considering, namely, the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change and the Millennium Project report. It was daunting task also because after hearing the feedback from Member States on what they liked or did not like about the two earlier reports, their key challenge was to assemble a good package of recommendations that the Secretary-General could present to the General Assembly. In this regard, they have managed to prepare a fairly concise and readable report with about 60 recommendations in all, which is about half the total number from the two earlier reports. Now that they have done that, the ball is in our court.

The Singapore delegation welcomes the Secretary-General's refreshing approach in issuing his report as a call to the United Nations membership to realize what he called "larger freedoms" for all: freedom from want, freedom from fear, freedom to live in dignity. To these we could perhaps add a fourth freedom for the United Nations: freedom from the inertia and narrow political interests that hold us back from really revitalizing and reforming the way we organize our work in this Organization.

My delegation hopes that we will all rise to this call to freedom, as the generation before us did when the United Nations decolonization process led the march to freedom of so many nations who became new States and are now represented among us here. The Trusteeship Council, which has been rendered redundant, stands today as a worthy testimonial of that major accomplishment.

In the interest of time and efficiency, the Singapore delegation will not repeat all that it had previously said — which remains valid — on crucial issues such as terrorism, the threats posed by the proliferation of nuclear, radiological, chemical and biological weapons, the use of force, the expansion and reform of the Security Council and the very significant

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and welcome idea of a Peacebuilding Commission. We will instead focus our preliminary views on some of the new elements in this report.

To begin with, it is worth noting that without peace, there can be no freedom. This was why the United Nations was created, to free or "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". While we have largely succeeded in reducing and phasing out inter-State conflicts, too many people today still know of and suffer from wars. Intra-State conflicts are a key reason for the lack of security, of investment and of development. A prolonged conflict situation creates poverty and want and uncertainty and fear, and it perpetuates a sense of helplessness and lack of dignity. We need to be more creative to break the vicious cycle of conflicts. My delegation strongly believes that there is scope for the Secretary-General to use his good offices to do more in the areas of mediation and conflict prevention. To that end, we should all agree to more resources being allocated in an institutionalized manner through assessed contributions.

In the context of freedom from want, Singapore appreciates the attention paid to Africa's special needs and, more generally, to the urgent need to dismantle barriers to market access and phase out trade-distorting domestic subsidies that hurt developing countries. We strongly support the recommendation that Member States provide duty- and quota-free market access for all exports from the least developed countries. We further agree that least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States should be given the necessary support to enable them to break out of their poverty traps or to overcome the special problems that the Millennium Project report has identified, so as to achieve sustainable development. In that regard, I would like to echo what the Permanent Representative of Samoa said on the importance of the Mauritius Strategy as a comprehensive plan for small island developing States to meet their Millennium Development Goals.

In the context of freedom from fear, the "Five-D" approach the Secretary-General has outlined seems fairly comprehensive and wise: dissuading people from supporting terrorism, denying terrorists access to funds and materials, deterring States from sponsoring terrorism, developing State capacity to counter terrorism, and defending human rights. Singapore is encouraged that so soon after the release of the Secretary-General's report, the Ad Hoc Committee on an international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism was able to conclude such a convention, after seven years of work.

In the context of freedom to live in dignity, Singapore fully subscribes to the importance of the rule of law as a necessary framework for an enabling environment in the new millennium in which we can work to advance human development. In the absence of the rule of law, the rule of man, mob rule or the law of the jungle will prevail. My delegation recalls the Secretary-General's landmark statement on the rule of law in the 3rd meeting of the fifty-ninth regular session of the General Assembly, in which he rightly pointed out that many of the problems that humankind continues to face today stem from the lack of the rule of law.

But laws and norms are also not static. They evolve over time. In a highly evolved global community, and especially in this new millennium, it is high time that massive killings and crimes against humanity become things of the past. Yet these things continue to happen, and they continue to be protected by the walls of an antiquated notion of absolute sovereignty. I am certain that none among us will speak for such crimes.

The issue then is what we, the members of the General Assembly, do about it. The reality is that we cannot simply wish such crimes away. My delegation sees this as a special challenge for Member States. We need to have frank, open-ended discussions to establish clear rules, underscored by clear and agreed criteria on how to prevent and deal with such crimes — criteria that would, at the same time, leave no room for abuse of any sort by anyone.

The Secretary-General also touched on democracy, asserting that the right of people to choose how they are ruled and who rules them must be the birthright of all. He also stated that its universal achievement must be a central objective of an Organization devoted to the cause of larger freedom. While Singapore is a democracy, and democracy is a fair and increasingly common means of achieving legitimate government, we believe that democracy should not be an end in itself. It is more important to have wise leadership and sound policies in place so as to ensure the delivery of results that meet people's aspirations.

Democracy provides for regular accountability by Governments to their peoples, favouring, but not necessarily guaranteeing, good governance. Good government requires good people at the helm who have leadership qualities and the best interests of the people at heart. The challenge for any country is to evolve a system that will continually inspire good and capable people to step up to the plate. Good leaders have the courage to stand up and do what is right — which often will not be what is expedient, especially in terms of posturing for the next election. Good leaders realize the importance of providing their people with a vision. They also believe in taking a long-term view by investing in their people and in infrastructure and by creating an enabling environment in which people can fulfil their potential and aspirations. Those are the necessary elements or ingredients for success in sustainable development that Professor Jeffrey Sachs and his team in the Millennium Project identified through their thorough work.

To guard against abuse and to prevent politicians and Governments from seeing their mandate as a short-term licence to do as they please, every State needs strong institutions for the rule of law with their own checks and balances. That is where the United Nations, as an Organization, can help, where such help is sought. By helping to build strong institutions and facilitating good governance, the United Nations can help advance the cause of larger freedom.

That leads me to my final point. The United Nations itself, as an institution, needs to be reformed and strengthened. We are encouraged to learn about the broad range of internal reform measures, some of which are long overdue — but better late than never — that the Secretary-General is planning to implement. One noble goal is to enhance the accountability of senior managers. In short, this is to practise what the Secretary-General has himself preached: to establish the rule of law in the Secretariat, with transparent rules and decision-making procedures. This should lead to a much better working environment for international civil servants by providing certainty as to their rights and responsibilities and eliminating any room for arbitrary decisions based on office politics or mob pressure. Regardless of rank, everyone should be held accountable for his or her own deeds or inactions. I would add that everyone should also be given his or her due credit, where credit is due. All of that will make for a more professional Secretariat.

In the cluster discussions, Singapore will provide further views, in particular on the revitalization of the General Assembly, the Secretariat and the proposed Human Rights Council.

Mr. Duclos (France) (*spoke in French*): My delegation would like to express its condolences to the Permanent Observer of the Holy See on the passing of His Holiness Pope John Paul II.

We would also like to express condolences to the delegation of Monaco on the passing of His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III.

The Permanent Representative of Luxembourg has set out the position of the European Union. France fully shares and supports that position. I will therefore limit myself to making a few additional comments. First, however, I would like to refer to the responsibility that we believe we all share in the decisive period that has just begun.

We all understand the important issues that will be at stake during the September summit. These include, first, the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and, in particular, the need for development efforts to be stepped up. Secondly, we must modernize the multilateral institutions. In this respect, we should ask ourselves what the cost of failure would be. We must have no illusions: let there be no mistake about the serious consequences of failure in September: the impetus to attain the Millennium Development Goals would be greatly weakened, and the credibility of our Organization would be damaged. Africa, whose special needs must be recognized during the summit, would also suffer as the result of such a failure.

We believe that the summit will be successful, because we believe that the conditions for its success are present. I would like to refer to two of those conditions. First, I believe that we have a good process that will lead to a successful outcome. Here, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to you, Mr. President, for the way in which you have been guiding our work. You have been able perfectly to combine the necessary openness and transparency with the authority that will enable us to make progress in a coherent manner. France fully supports the road map that you have drawn up for the next few months. Only in that way — under your direction and with the help of the facilitators — will we be able to reach the best

possible results in September. It goes without saying that we fully place our trust in you.

The first condition, then, is a good process; that is now in place. The second condition for success is support for the proposals set out in the Secretary-General's report (A/59/2005), which we believe provide the best possible basis for the achievement of positive results. We could improve them, make them more specific or flesh them out. But we believe that they provide the foundation for our work.

I would like now to comment in further detail on the Secretary-General's proposals. First of all, the proposals are relevant, coherent and clear. They are relevant because the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change worked for a year on collective security. The Millennium Project brought together hundreds of development researchers. Above all, we discussed the issue at length in the Assembly under your guidance, Sir, at the beginning of the year.

The report of the Secretary-General has taken account of the contributions made by the Panel and the Millennium Project, as well as the contributions of delegations during the course of the many consultations that took place of the beginning of this year. The report of the Secretary-General has succeeded in focusing on the few questions that call for a decision of the part of heads of State or Government.

The Secretary-General's proposals are also balanced. Here again, our messages were properly understood. I am thinking, first, of development, which the report has now given its rightful pride of place while retaining the boldness of the Sachs report. Due account has now been taken of a number important issues that had been addressed inadequately by the two major outside reports, such as human rights, the environment, humanitarian action. The same is true for some of the key organs of the United Nations, specifically the Economic and Social Council. In our view, the report of the Secretary-General strikes a proper balance among all those equally legitimate concerns.

Let me briefly hail the clarity of the Secretary-General's proposals. Too often, we yield to the temptation to offer weak formulas that are never implemented. Thus, we welcome the Secretary-General's decision to propose specific measures that are both bold and feasible.

Of course, as I said a moment ago, we need further clarifications, modifications and additions. Some of the proposals themselves call for new developments, and France, along with the European Union, will offer suggestions in that regard. But again, during the discussions we must not lose sight of what is important.

I shall now address a few more specific matters in order to illustrate the general comments I have just made.

First, in our view, financing for development is a key element of overall balance. The commitments we make will determine in large part whether or not the Millennium Development Goals are attained. We must therefore make every effort to follow the course plotted by the Secretary-General. This includes the following elements: a specific timetable for increasing official development assistance to 0.7 per cent of gross national income; a massive improvement in the quality of assistance; ensuring that debt is manageable; and providing the innovative resources that are indispensable for meeting the needs before us. On the latter element, France will work with others to clarify the Secretary-General's proposals, which we fully support. In addition to taking decisions of principle, we must plan a number of pilot projects, such as a tax on air travel to help fund the fight against AIDS.

My second example is the fight against terrorism, which demands unambiguous responses. We must identify terrorism and fight it together. The strategy outlined by the Secretary-General in his 10 March statement in Madrid offers the elements for joint action. We must be ready to adopt them. The adoption on 4 April of a draft convention against nuclear terrorism shows that this is possible. It shows that there is a determination to overcome our differences. We must continue pressing forward.

My third example is peacebuilding. Our discussions have shown clearly that we lack a forum to mobilize and coordinate action on the part of all relevant actors. In our view, the establishment of a peacebuilding commission is already among the expected outcomes of the summit. The mandate and functions proposed by the Secretary-General seem to us to be sound. They are in line with the general thrust of our early debates on this subject. We hope that we are nearing a solution on this matter.

Fourthly, the promotion of human dignity is a key purpose of the United Nations. In today's world, its importance is increasing. For our part, we believe in the "responsibility to protect". We believe in the rule of law. We believe in human rights. The Commission on Human Rights played a primary role in establishing the body of standards, policies and instruments that we formulated together over past decades. But we must recognize that it is now facing problems. To bolster the legitimacy and effectiveness of the United Nations body responsible for human rights, France endorses the idea of enhancing its status, with a parallel strengthening of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Here again, to be sure, we must carefully consider the practical details. We must bear in mind that human rights are universal and that all States and civil society must therefore be engaged, in one way or the other, in United Nations debates on human rights. This is something on which special consideration should begin very soon, under your leadership, Mr. President.

Fifthly, the proposals related to the specialized agencies are of great importance. To an extent, they will determine the Organization's capacity to respond to the challenges of development, humanitarian action and the environment. It is increasingly obvious that, for some agencies, bold reform is required to ensure the coherence of their activities. The September summit will provide a unique opportunity to create momentum in that direction. Here, I am thinking in particular of the environment.

Let me end with a few words about the principal organs of the United Nations. We welcome the Secretary-General's proposals on the revitalization of the General Assembly and on the Economic and Social Council, and we are prepared to work on those proposals. We support their general thrust, although, of course, they require some clarification.

On the Security Council, the French position is well known; it has not changed.

As you have said, Mr. President, we are beginning the second phase of our work leading up to the summit. This will be a decisive phase, for which the Secretary-General, as requested, has provided the solid foundation we require to formulate the draft decisions that we will place before our heads of State or Government. Now, we must work actively for success.

Mr. Denisov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): At the outset, allow me, on behalf of my delegation, to echo previous speakers' words of condolence on the passing of the head of the Catholic Church and of the head of the Government of Monaco.

The Russian delegation welcomes this discussion of the report of the Secretary-General entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all", which is taking place in a collective and transparent format — that is, in a General Assembly meeting.

The content of the report is consonant with Russia's fundamental position on the strengthening of the international system of collective security, with the United Nations and the Security Council as key players; on the enhancement of the structures of the world Organization; and on increasing the effectiveness of its work in all areas.

We fully agree with the Secretary-General's conclusions on the interconnectedness of the various actions that need to be taken to address the fundamental threats and challenges facing the world today. Indeed, the role of the United Nations in tackling these issues is pivotal.

However, the Organization must have the necessary resources at its disposal in order to be more effective and more efficient. That is the main goal of United Nations reform and should lead to a further rallying of the international community around the principles of multilateralism. That is why decisions on fundamental issues should be based on the broadest possible agreement among Member States and on the bedrock of international law — the Charter of the United Nations.

The Secretary-General rightly expressed the common understanding that socio-economic development is a priority, identifying key areas of work to implement the Millennium Development Goals. We agree with the rationale of the Millennium Declaration and the Monterrey Consensus, which served as a basis for the report. That rationale represents a recognition of the relevant commitments made in the area of development with respect to developed and developing countries, and this, in our opinion, is a constructive basis for decision-making at the September summit.

With respect to reform of the Economic and Social Council, we support the focus on more effective

implementation of the decisions taken at global socio-economic conferences; the strengthening of the link between the normative and operational activities of the United Nations system; and the enhancement of the Council's capacity to address the socio-economic problems related to post-conflict peacebuilding and development. However, we are not convinced that there is a need for a major review of the Council's functioning. We believe that all of the reform initiatives proposed by the Secretary-General are fully attainable within the framework of the current format of the Council.

One of the most important elements of the "new consensus" referred to in the report should be agreement on the issue of the use of force. Russia believes that the Charter of the United Nations remains a reliable and solid legal basis for resolving problems related to the use of force and does not require revision or a new interpretation. We fully share the Secretary-General's recommendations on the adoption of a Security Council resolution that sets out principles on the use of force. The elaboration of such principles, however, must not compromise the Security Council's ability to take relevant decisions in specific situations.

The Secretary-General and the High-level Panel define the concept of "responsibility to protect" as an "emerging norm". Strictly speaking, the establishment of an international norm presupposes that there is wide support within the international community for such a norm. However, that is not the case here. Yet it is clear that massive human rights violations and genocide could be cause for intervention by the international community. Such action can be taken only when authorized by the Security Council, once the Council has qualified the relevant internal or regional crisis as a threat to international peace and security under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. In such cases, Security Council decisions must be based on reliable information. The positions of the relevant regional organizations should be taken account of, and the use of force must remain a last resort.

On the whole, we welcome the Secretary-General's proposed comprehensive strategy to combat terrorism, including countering its newest and most dangerous manifestations — first and foremost, the threat of terrorists' gaining access to weapons of mass destruction.

We support the willingness of the Secretary-General and of the High-level Panel to contribute to the drafting of a universal definition of terrorism. However, the elements proposed for such a definition are more political than legal in character. It is important to avoid wording that could be interpreted as placing the criminal acts of terrorists on an equal footing with the anti-terrorist efforts of States.

We agree with the Secretary-General's call for the further universalization and fine-tuning of anti-terrorist conventions and mechanisms. An important step in this area was the adoption on 1 April of this year by the Ad Hoc Committee on Terrorism of the draft International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, which was initiated by Russia seven years ago. We hope that the text of that Convention will be adopted by the General Assembly in the near future.

As concerns the disarmament section of the report, I should like to point out the rightly emphasized need for further effective steps to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, including the counter-terrorist aspect of this problem. Worthy of consideration is the recommendation to adopt a Security Council resolution that would make it more difficult for terrorists to acquire or use man-portable air defence systems.

However, at this stage it would be premature to speak of pushing for the drafting of a legally binding international instrument on the marking, tracing and brokering of small arms and light weapons. There is no agreement yet on this issue, and the work of the expert groups is ongoing.

We share the view that the protection of human rights must be one of the components of the United Nations strategy to combat terrorism. We must also bear in mind the threat posed by terrorism to human rights at the national and international levels, as well as the problem of protecting victims of terrorism.

We concur with the Secretary-General that the work of the Commission on Human Rights is often hampered due to excessive politicization, confrontational attitudes and the use of double standards. Change is definitely overdue in that respect. But what changes are required? And how can the positive aspects of the work of the Commission on Human Rights be maintained? Clearly, we have to keep in mind the broad support that exists for the High-level Panel's idea of universal membership in the Commission.

We share the concern expressed about the failure to allocate sufficient resources to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, especially in the light of the proposals made to broaden its area of responsibility.

One of the key components of United Nations reform is reform of the Security Council to make that key organ in the security sphere more representative. Russia's position on specific aspects of the issue of Council expansion is well known; we have expressed it repeatedly, including during the discussion on the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565). We must continue our efforts to reach the broadest possible agreement on that issue in order to avoid a schism in the United Nations, which would have grave consequences for the world Organization.

With regard to amending the Charter of the United Nations, a cautious approach is required. We continue to believe that, at this stage, it would be premature to discuss deleting the articles concerning the Military Staff Committee.

We consider that the Secretary-General's recommendations will encourage joint efforts to strengthen the peacekeeping capacity of the United Nations, including through strengthened cooperation between the Organization and regional partners, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter.

We support the idea of creating a peacebuilding commission to enhance the coordination and effectiveness of post-conflict assistance to countries emerging from crisis. The working methods for such a body must be carefully and thoroughly discussed.

In our view, the implementation of the proposed reforms should not increase the financial burden on Member States.

We reaffirm the General Assembly's decisive role in ensuring that the Organization's resources are used in the most efficient way, in deciding on the specific ways in which they will be used, and in appropriately monitoring the work of the Secretariat.

In general, the Secretary-General's proposals are a solid basis for a successful United Nations summit in September. The important problems mentioned in his report deserve to be considered carefully and thoroughly, without any artificial deadlines. With regard to some issues on which there is broad agreement or, better yet, consensus, decisions could be taken very soon, before the September summit. We agree with the Secretary-General that the summit should result in a number of far-reaching and courageous decisions. Russia will do its utmost to facilitate that.

Mr. Ilkin (Turkey): Let me begin by thanking the Secretary-General for his visionary, comprehensive and thought-provoking report (A/59/2005), which will be guiding us during the reform process. I would also like to thank you, Mr. President, for your active personal involvement in the reform process and for your successful conduct of our meetings and consultations. Last but not least, my warmest thanks go to our facilitators, who are doing everything possible to ensure the successful conclusion of our endeavours to reform the United Nations.

While we fully align ourselves with the European Union statement, I would also like to emphasize some points of particular interest to Turkey.

We have come a long way since the 1990s in our efforts to reform the Organization. We recognize that the prospect of reform seems more within reach than ever before. All Member States should seize the opportunity to contribute to the reform process and should show maximum flexibility in order to achieve an outcome that is cohesive, lasting and in the interest of the Organization as a whole.

When we undertook to reform the Organization, we knew that there was a difficult and long road ahead. We should continue to strive to find the best solutions in each reform cluster, which will strengthen the credibility of the Organization and sustain it for a long time to come. As we do that, we should acknowledge that the framework and the substance of the reform package are both of the utmost importance. There is no way that we can rebuild the Organization in a selective manner, leaving some parts of the old structure intact. That is something we cannot afford to do.

It is clear that one of the main difficulties on the way to achieving reforms is the restructuring of the Security Council. It is only natural that we might have differences among ourselves, since every country has its own interests, requirements and expectations. All of these need to be reconciled. Although full consensus is very desirable, it seems that we may not be able to achieve it on this particular issue. Yet the United Nations Charter clearly defines what is required to

amend it. What is important is that we find a common denominator among the overwhelming majority of Member countries.

As for the restructuring of the Security Council, the Secretary-General clearly underlined in his report that models A and B are not presented on a take-it-or-leave-it basis. We will try to see to what extent we can produce a common denominator from those models — if need be, by introducing some new ideas. For example, is the number 24 for the total membership of a new Security Council an unrevisable figure? Why not 25 members, for example? Why is there a need to reorganize the existing regional areas and to reduce their number from five to four? Such a change would necessitate an entirely new format for the functioning of the various United Nations bodies. What is more, through the proposed merger, the Western European and Eastern European groups stand to lose a seat — something that potential non-permanent members from those two groups could not afford.

On the other hand, the review mechanism envisaged for the year 2020 does not seem realistic when we consider what we have been experiencing for the past 10 years. Thus, we should agree on a new structure for the Security Council that would not necessitate further change for the foreseeable future.

The Security Council and the General Assembly are two inseparable institutions. Clearly, the General Assembly also needs to be reformed, and one can see that there is a general understanding on what needs to be done. As we restructure the Security Council, we should ensure that we retain the delicate balance between the two organs. In other words, in real and practical terms, the role and the powers of the General Assembly should not be overshadowed.

As to the criteria to be taken into consideration in evaluating candidatures, those proposed in the reports are indeed objective. Yet we must admit that they are quite restrictive and exclusive. We should not deprive countries of non-permanent seats on the Security Council just because they are unable to fulfil all or some of the criteria. In principle, all countries should be represented at some time in all United Nations bodies, on a rotational basis, if necessary.

Moreover, the criteria related to participation in peacekeeping operations need to be reconsidered and more broadly interpreted. The contributions of Member States to the maintenance of international peace and security, as referred to in Article 23 of the Charter, cannot and should not be limited solely to their contributions to United Nations-led peacekeeping operations. In honouring that article, we must be inclusive. We need to take into account the contributions of Member States to peacekeeping operations mandated but not led by the United Nations. That is a realistic and feasible approach, as we are trying to promote cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. More and more, we are asking regional organizations to contribute to peacekeeping operations throughout the world. Yet we are still making a clear distinction between United Nations-led operations and operations conducted by regional organizations. If regional organizations are not encouraged to make contributions to United Nations-mandated peacekeeping operations, then the United Nations will have to undertake such operations using its own assets. The question is, can the United Nations afford that?

Terrorism has undoubtedly become one of the most serious threats to the peace, security and welfare of the global community. As a country which has long suffered from this scourge, Turkey has been calling for increased international cooperation in the fight against terrorism. We welcome the suggestions put forth by the Secretary-General for preventing terrorism, as well as his comprehensive strategy to eradicate that universal threat. We strongly believe that the legal framework in this particular area can be strengthened only if all Member States become parties to the relevant United Nations conventions and protocols.

I would like to touch upon the High-level Panel's recommendations on sanctions. The recommendations address only one basic dimension of the issue, without referring to the needs and problems of third States in implementing sanctions. It is a fact that Article 50 of the Charter cannot be easily invoked. Turkey's experience in the aftermath of the Iraq-Kuwait conflict is a case in point. Therefore, we welcome the Secretary-General's clear reference to that shortcoming in his report.

The issue of the use of force is very much at the heart of United Nations reform. The common understanding that we are expected to reach on this issue will have a direct impact on the future role of our Organization in defending peace and security.

In order not to repeat what has already been said by a number of my colleagues, I would just like to

reiterate that Turkey also fully shares the vision and strategy of the Secretary-General with respect to what he has so eloquently termed "freedom from want".

We concur with the Secretary-General's inclusive and comprehensive approach towards addressing the current problems of Africa. In the course of all of the deliberations and work in this Organization, therefore, we should always take the African dimension into account, with a view to extending vital coordinated support to help African countries. The Turkish Government declared 2005 the Year of Africa and looks forward to further developing close relations and cooperation with the countries of the continent.

The recommendations of the Secretary-General related to the Economic and Social Council are valid and appropriate. The Economic and Social Council definitely needs to be revitalized in the light of the immense changes that have taken place in the economic and social spheres over the past 60 years. A more focused Economic and Social Council should provide strategic guidance, promote coherence and coordination and evaluate performance without interfering in the work of other financial and trade organizations.

We must examine in depth the issue of the proposed human rights council. Since the idea is new, and since it would inevitably affect the functioning of human rights mechanisms in the United Nations as a whole, we need to further evaluate it and consult among ourselves.

As to the reorganization of the Secretariat, we are of the opinion that the most authoritative person to come up with new ideas and recommendations is the Secretary-General himself. We have full confidence in the wisdom and experience of the Secretary-General, and support his ideas and proposals related to the reorganization of the Secretariat.

Ms. Løj (Denmark): Denmark would like to fully align itself with the statement made yesterday by the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union.

Denmark welcomes the report of the Secretary-General entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (A/59/2005). In our view, the recommendations set out by the Secretary-General form a good basis for devising a comprehensive United Nations response to the threats and challenges which are facing the world today in the fields of development, security, human rights, justice and the rule of law. We agree with the Secretary-General that the recommendations are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. They should be dealt with by Member States accordingly.

The report of the Secretary-General raises many important and complicated issues. I would like to single out three central challenges to which we attach primary importance. First of all, at the summit, heads of State or Government should agree on financing the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, with particular emphasis on Africa.

Secondly, the peacebuilding capacity of the United Nations should be strengthened through the establishment of a peacebuilding commission, as recommended by the Secretary-General in his report. We look forward to receiving the Secretary-General's more detailed proposals on this crucial issue.

Thirdly, the United Nations must strengthen its fight against terrorism based on the recommendations and strategy of the Secretary-General. The United Nations must also strengthen its efforts in the fight against weapons of mass destruction.

Obviously, those three central issues cannot be seen in isolation. Heads of State or Government should take further steps to strengthen United Nations efforts in the fields of human rights and the rule of law. They should also agree on effective measures to deal with climate change and enhance environmental protection.

We support the recommendation of the Secretary-General, contained in the annex to the report, on access to reproductive health. At the summit, world leaders must reiterate the linkage between achieving the Millennium Development Goals and ensuring reproductive rights and universal access to reproductive health, as well as the importance of an intensified fight against HIV/AIDS.

The Secretary-General has rightly pointed out the need for continued reform of the Secretariat and of intergovernmental bodies. We encourage the Secretary-General to continue the modernization of the Organization, which he has set in motion under his prerogative as chief administrative officer.

Denmark will engage actively in efforts to further develop the proposals of the Secretary-General regarding reform of the General Assembly, the Security

Council and the Economic and Social Council. We commend the Secretary-General for his proposal to establish a human rights council and look forward to seeing that recommendation further elaborated.

Heads of State or Government must take bold and ambitious decisions at the summit so as to ensure that the United Nations can better respond to the threats and challenges facing today's world. With his excellent report, the Secretary-General has now put the ball in the court of Member States. May I assure you, Mr. President, of the determination of this delegation to work actively with you, your facilitators and Member States in the continued preparatory process under your able leadership.

Mr. Paolillo (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): The fact that many of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/59/2005) consist of reaffirmations of previously accepted principles and commitments and of exhortations to accede to, ratify or fulfil previously existing treaties shows that there is nothing new to say, that the time has passed for declarations concerning reform of the system to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and deal with the threats of the world today and that what needs to be done now is carry out our promises.

The Government of Uruguay therefore agrees with the Secretary-General that the time has come for decisions, that we must face immediate threats with immediate action and that the meeting of world leaders in September on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations offers an excellent opportunity to reach agreement on the work programme for the twenty-first century.

However, we are not so certain that the decisions should be adopted as a package, as the Secretary-General proposes. We believe that we should act with prudence to ensure that, in pursuing the ambitious goal of reaching agreement on the whole package of measures, we do not end up delaying implementation. We must leave open the possibility of taking a progressive approach to reform and adopting decisions as agreement is reached.

Care must also be taken with how the measures are adopted. We do not believe that, if consensus is impossible, we should press forward and adopt measures that have only the partial support of States. At least the measures involving major reforms or amendments to the Charter must be adopted by consensus. The adoption of measures on such important questions without the international community's broad support would not strengthen our ability to resolve the great problems we have to face.

Uruguay agrees with most of the Secretary-General's recommendations, but we note that many of them, which consist of appeals to States to fulfil commitments they have made and obligations flowing from treaties and conventions, are reiterations of recommendations already made in other forums and instruments, such as, for example, the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565). Unfortunately, the Secretary-General does not propose any mechanism to assess the extent of States' compliance with those recommendations. He might have proposed, for example, the preparation of periodic reports on the ratification of the most important international instruments and the extent of their implementation.

Moreover, there are recommendations in the section entitled "Freedom from want" that seem too general and imprecise. I have the impression that many States, in particular developing countries, that are prepared to comply with some of the recommendations contained in paragraph 5 of the report's annex, would not know where to begin. It would have been very useful to have more concrete guidance in those cases.

The recommendations in the section entitled "Freedom from fear" include one that causes us serious doubts: the recommendation requesting the Security Council to adopt a resolution setting out the principles governing the use of force. It is understood that this is an attempt to regulate the use of force by the Security Council, not by States. My delegation can see no need to attempt such regulation, which would include unnecessary reaffirmations of existing principles and rules so fundamental that their reaffirmation would be redundant. According to the Secretary-General, such a resolution should also set out criteria to guide the Security Council in authorizing or resorting to the use of force. But it is obvious that the Security Council carries out its functions under Chapter VII using those criteria. Thus, their explicit formulation in a resolution is unnecessary. How can it be imagined that the Security Council would resort to the use of military force without taking into account the purpose for which it is used, the seriousness of the threat or the chances of success?

The regulation of the use of force by the Security Council seems not only unnecessary but dangerous because the creation of rules in addition to the provisions of the Charter, or rules interpreting these provisions, could end up working as a straitjacket that puts undue constraints on the Council's discretion to take action under Chapter VII of the Charter, leading to inaction.

At this moment, my delegation cannot adopt a final position on that matter. To do so, we need to undertake a more detailed analysis of the proposals, which include, among other issues, that of deciding which organ has the authority to adopt the proposed regulation.

The recommendation concerning the International Court of Justice is very ambiguous. First, we see no need for the international community to recognize the important role of what is nothing less than the principal judicial organ of the United Nations. Secondly, one would need to know why the Secretary-General believes that the work of the Court needs to be strengthened and what ideas he has for achieving that objective. Is he thinking of a change in the Court's composition, a change in its procedures, or a change in its jurisdiction?

With respect to institutional reform, Uruguay reaffirms that priority should be given to the revitalization of the General Assembly. We also believe that a drastic reduction in its agenda and focusing it on the most important problems of the day are the most appropriate way to achieve that objective. All the other measures can improve the procedures and streamline the functioning of the Assembly, but they are not enough to ensure that the Assembly will regain its due authority as the most representative organ of the Organization.

With respect to the Security Council, we note that the Secretary-General refers to its reform as a means of ensuring greater representation of the international community in that organ. Thus, he recommends the adoption in September 2005 of a decision supporting one of the two models for reform proposed by the High-level Panel for Threats, Challenges and Change. However, we must recall that in reforming the Security Council, we are seeking to make it not only more representative but also more democratic and more effective. Consultations and negotiations have been taking place in recent years to achieve that threefold aim. The difficulties in reaching agreement are due precisely to the fact that some of the reform proposals for ensuring greater representativity actually create obstacles to achieving the other two objectives.

We find very sound the proposal that the Economic and Social Council should convene whenever there is a threat to development so that coordinated measures to respond to the situation can be adopted. That would permit the Council not only to react immediately but also to coordinate its work with that of the Security Council when the circumstances warrant it.

Finally, we agree that we should make significant institutional and functional changes to the Commission on Human Rights. However, we fail to see how a smaller human rights council elected by the General Assembly would be shielded from the risks of politicization and the ensuing loss of credibility.

I believe that before taking a decision on this matter, we should have more information on aspects of the proposal that are not clear. For example, we need clarification about the last sentence of paragraph 183 of the report, which, enigmatically in our opinion, says in the Spanish version that, "Las personas" elected to the human rights council should undertake to abide by the highest human rights standards. Perhaps the terminology used in the Spanish version is an error of translation. But, if that is not the case, perhaps the proposal is pointing to a way forward that could really correct the institutional weaknesses of the Commission on Human Rights.

In the debates planned for the coming days, my delegation intends to make additional comments.

Mr. Kim Sam-hoon (Republic of Korea): At the outset, I would like, on behalf of the Republic of Korea, to join other delegations in mourning the passing of His Holiness Pope John Paul II and His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III of the Principality of Monaco. I offer my heartfelt condolences to all who have been touched by the loss of those two remarkable persons.

On behalf of my delegation, I would like to commend the Secretary-General for his dedication in producing his report (A/59/2005). We believe that the report will lay the groundwork for a negotiated package of decisions to be taken by world leaders at the high-level plenary meeting in September. Now it is

the duty of Member States to translate the report's recommendations into actions that will enable all people to live in larger freedom, leading towards peace, prosperity and progress.

The Secretary-General rightly emphasized the importance of consensus as the basis for decisions at the high-level plenary meeting. The objective of those decisions should be to make the General Assembly more flexible, effective and efficient in addressing the pressing needs of the global community. Accordingly, Member States should refrain from rushing into any decision that might divide them. Broad consensus is the only way to ensure the legitimacy and the full implementation of the decisions that will come out of our serious efforts this year.

We share the Secretary-General's view that for the first time ever the international community has the resources and the knowledge necessary to realize the goal of universal freedom from want. Hence, our debate on development issues should focus on how to faithfully carry out existing commitments based on shared responsibility and accountability, as agreed in Monterrey and Johannesburg.

As an emerging donor with unique development experience, the Republic of Korea has intensified its efforts to provide financial and technical assistance to developing countries. My Government is now working out a long-term plan to increase and improve official development assistance within our means.

The seven clusters of public investment and policies for national development proposed by the Secretary-General should be developed in a balanced way to reduce poverty effectively. Given that 70 per cent of people in extreme poverty live in rural areas, renewed focus should be placed on rural and agricultural development.

Successful completion of the Doha Development Agenda negotiations, combined with assistance in building the export competitiveness of developing States, is essential for facilitating development. In that regard, we look forward to the successful outcome of the upcoming World Trade Organization ministerial conference, to be held in Hong Kong in December 2005, at which the interests of developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, will be duly considered.

The Republic of Korea supports the launching of a series of quick-win development initiatives. To maximize their outcome, those initiatives should be coordinated with long-term comprehensive development plans.

In a globalized world, health issues are assuming greater importance as the nexus between health, international security and development grows. We have deep concerns about the global community's lack of progress in meeting the health targets of the Millennium Development Goals. My Government believes that the United Nations should play an active role in facilitating the redoubling of efforts by Member States to address health issues.

Climate change is a priority that the whole international community must tackle. As a party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol, the Republic of Korea has been actively involved in international efforts to reduce global warming gases. We hope that the "beyond 2012" scheme will be agreed upon, with broad-based participation by developed and developing States alike, taking into due consideration the sustainable development goals of each country.

Any threat to one State must be treated as a threat to all; such threats call for a collective response by the entire international community. In countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, our imminent task is to make existing regimes more universal and effective while building our capacity to cope with newly emerging threats. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) regime remains indispensable in maintaining international peace and security. In that context, we hope that the Secretary-General's recommendations on the NPT will be appropriately addressed at the upcoming Review Conference in May.

The Republic of Korea attaches great importance to the effective verification of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The verification capacity of the International Atomic Energy Agency must be upgraded through universal adoption of the Additional Protocol. Stricter control over sensitive nuclear technologies and materials is also needed. However, we must ensure that States parties to the NPT that fully comply with their treaty obligations are guaranteed the right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The Republic of Korea applauds the adoption of the draft text of an international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism. We pledge our full cooperation in working for the conclusion of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism before the end of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly.

The Republic of Korea supports enhancing the United Nations role in the prevention, resolution and management of conflicts through greater cooperation and coordination with regional organizations. Similarly, United Nations peacekeeping operations could be made more efficient through closer cooperation with political missions deployed in the same regions, as well as by better coordination among United Nations offices and agencies in different countries.

As we have already stated, we fully endorse the creation of a peacebuilding commission. However, the proposed sequential model requires further clarification with respect to how we would delineate the various stages in the continuum from post-conflict to development. The mandate and funding options for a peacebuilding commission also require in-depth discussion. In the light of the merits of a holistic approach to institutional reform, it might be better to discuss this item under the cluster of strengthening the United Nations system.

My Government greatly appreciates the Secretary-General's serious efforts to highlight the significance of human rights in today's world, giving them equal standing with security and development. It is high time for us to come up with more effective ways to protect and promote human rights. In this vein, we fully back the initiative to strengthen the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

As a founding member of the Community of Democracies, the Republic of Korea strongly supports the idea of establishing and strengthening democratic institutions. My Government looks forward to intensive discussions on the detailed operational modalities and monitoring mechanisms of the proposed democracy fund.

In our view, the concept of "responsibility to protect" should receive serious consideration on our part. We must explore ways to deter and prevent massive or systematic violations of international human rights or humanitarian law in failing or failed States. While the sovereignty of a State should be fully respected, this should no longer be an excuse for the international community to shirk its responsibility to prevent massive human catastrophes. We earnestly hope that the General Assembly will engage in a thorough debate to elaborate this emerging yet crucial concept.

We also concur with the view of the Secretary-General that Member States must cooperate fully with the International Criminal Court and other war crimes tribunals. That includes apprehending accused persons and surrendering them to those bodies upon request.

My Government is a strong supporter of a comprehensive, holistic reform of the United Nations that would enable it to respond more effectively to the new challenges of the twenty-first century. The position of the Republic of Korea on Security Council reform is well known. We support an expansion of the number of elected seats only — not permanent seats — and we support an improved version of model B as a basis for negotiations among Member States, with a view to reaching a broad consensus. Any successful reform must make the Security Council more broadly and equitably representative, effective, efficient, democratic, accountable and transparent. We believe that model A would seriously undermine those essential goals.

First, the idea of adding permanent seats runs counter to the principle of broad and equitable representation, because it would critically reduce the opportunities for medium-sized and small States to be represented in the Security Council.

Secondly, an expansion involving six new permanent seats would constitute a formidable impediment to the effective functioning of the Security Council. The six new permanent members, together with the existing five permanent ones, would constitute almost half of the Security Council membership. The parochial interests of those 11 countries could complicate the Council's decision-making process.

Thirdly, it is very unlikely that the creation of another category of permanent seats would enhance the transparency of the Security Council's work.

Fourthly, history teaches us that there is no accountability without periodic elections. Given the tremendous difficulty of attempting to correct a fait accompli in the structure of the Security Council, we

have serious doubts about the viability of any review mechanism. Periodic elections are the only legitimate means of ensuring the accountability of Security Council members. An expansion of the number of permanent seats runs directly counter to the goal of a more democratic and accountable Security Council.

Last but not least, we would like to dispel the misapprehension that Security Council members represent the interests of the regions from which they come. The truth is that Security Council members have mostly represented their own national interests.

On 31 March, a group of countries proposed a plan of action regarding Security Council reform. We have reservations about that approach. The process is not likely to meet with success, but it will create serious divisions among the general membership, thereby casting a shadow on prospects for the summit in September.

We know that Security Council reform is very important in terms of both the future of the United Nations and the long-term national interests of many countries. We have not yet exhausted all opportunities to pull together the various and divergent views on this matter and negotiate among Member States in a spirit of flexibility and compromise. We do not support any artificial deadlines or a rush to decision on Security Council reform. We urge all Member States to engage actively and constructively in deliberations and negotiations to evolve a broad consensus on Security Council reform.

With regard to the proposal to set up a human rights council, we also recognize the growing need to reform the United Nations mechanism for dealing with human rights. However, given its significant implications, we are still reviewing the proposal in detail and will make comments at a later date.

The role of the Economic and Social Council in coordinating economic and social bodies, particularly in implementing the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits, should be reinforced. In the meantime, the idea of expanding the Bureau of the Economic and Social Council and establishing an executive committee warrants careful consideration.

We welcome the initiative to enhance the competence and accountability of the Secretariat. My delegation is eager to see more detailed plans for rejuvenating the Secretariat, including long-term projections and strategies. Regarding a one-time staff buyout, my delegation can go along with it only if it can be implemented without additional resources.

In closing, Mr. President, I am confident that, under your able guidance, we will achieve substantive outcomes with respect to the major event in September. My delegation reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the ongoing efforts to revitalize the United Nations, and we pledge our active participation in, and contribution to, the discussions ahead.

Mr. Adekanye (Nigeria): I would like to begin my remarks by expressing the deepest condolences of the people and the Government of Nigeria to the Holy See on the passing of His Holiness Pope John Paul II, and also to the Principality of Monaco on the death of His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III.

I would also like to convey our appreciation to you, Mr. President, for having organized this plenary meeting to discuss the Secretary-General's report (A/59/2005) as part of the process of preparing for a successful summit next September.

Nigeria associates itself with the statements made at the beginning of this debate by Malaysia, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement; Jamaica, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China; and Malawi, on behalf of the African Group. I would nonetheless like to make the following additional remarks in our national capacity.

First, we commend the Secretary-General for his report, which reflects his personal experience, strength of conviction and understanding of the Charter of the Organization. His views and recommendations represent a welcome vision for a strong and effective United Nations, which the successive reports he has been submitting to the General Assembly since 1997 have echoed. Obviously, those recommendations touch on vital issues and areas that will merit careful assessment in the course of deliberations among Member States.

Secondly, as we have previously expressed in our statements, Nigeria recognizes the strong link among peace, security and development. That is also clear from the Secretary-General's report, which echoes in part the views enunciated in both the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change and in the Millennium Project report. For us in Nigeria — as, indeed, for other developing countries — development

should be at the centre of global action to eradicate poverty, combat diseases, promote peace and security and ensure environmental sustainability. We therefore look forward to the discussion of those issues in the next round of consultations.

Thirdly, Nigeria believes that the special needs of Africa must be addressed — a fact that is amply recognized by the Secretary-General. For us as Member States, the challenge is therefore to translate words into concrete action. Africa expects accelerated implementation of the various initiatives launched bilaterally and multilaterally to support the continent's development. For their part, African countries have demonstrated their commitment to economic and political reforms. We have aligned the programmes of the New Partnership for Africa's Development — our flagship continental development framework — with the Millennium Development Goals.

The international community should complement our efforts by providing structured technical support and effectively deployed financial support and access to the global market. Africa needs debt cancellation, as no growth can take place with a heavy debt burden. We therefore expect that the September summit will go beyond unfair stereotypes of Africa by taking decisions on the proposals contained in the Millennium Project report, which Nigeria fully supports.

Fourthly, I would like to reaffirm Nigeria's overall support for the revitalization of United Nations institutions. In that regard, we note the proposals of the Secretary-General to strengthen the General Assembly. As the highest deliberative organ of the United Nations, the Assembly has in the past used its important convening power to influence, if not shape, the global agenda and global action. Any reform of this organ should seek to reinforce its role in line with Charter provisions.

With regard to the Economic and Social Council, it is our desire to see the Council assume prominence as a moral voice on international economic and social matters. The Secretary-General's views on the Council's role in coordination, in policy review and in guidance on economic and social matters are undoubtedly significant in that regard. So is the suggestion that the Council should hold an annual ministerial assessment of progress towards achieving internationally agreed development goals. We are, however, still studying the implications of the recommendation to biennialize the Council's high-level segment and how that would affect the flexibility that would be required to respond to emerging global social and economic issues.

Concerning the Security Council, Nigeria supports the proposals for expanding its membership to make it more representative and more democratic and an efficient organ of the United Nations. As was stated by the representative of Malawi on behalf of the African Member States, Nigeria reiterates its conviction that Africa deserves a minimum of two permanent seats on an expanded Council. The September summit should provide our leaders a unique opportunity to address that important matter and other aspects of comprehensive United Nations reform.

Nigeria also notes with interest the Secretary-General's views on human rights. We reaffirm our commitment to the promotion and enjoyment of those rights by the Nigerian people and our support for United Nations instruments and institutions established to enhance their enjoyment by all peoples. We are, however, carefully studying the proposal concerning the replacement of the Commission on Human Rights with a Human Rights Council, particularly its wider implications for all Member States.

Reform of the United Nations will be incomplete unless we as Member States take a bold position in support of system-wide coherence, consistency and coordination, as the Secretary-General has observed. We also believe that the principles of democratic governance, accountability and transparency should underpin the operations of the United Nations and of its agencies. For too long, developing countries have canvassed for such a position in various forums, particularly with regard to international financial and trading institutions.

Nigeria believes that the forthcoming summit should send a clear message to the Hong Kong ministerial meeting on trade to be held in December 2005 on the need to conclude the negotiations on the Doha Round in 2006.

Finally, there are ideas and recommendations reflected in the report whose implementation could affect the nature and balance of power and responsibilities under the United Nations Charter. They could also redefine the intergovernmental character of the Organization. Such an outcome should be driven by the hopes and aspirations of Member States. The

Organization emerging from this common endeavour will deserve our support, defence and sustenance. I want to assure you, Mr. President, that Nigeria will be involved in that process by participating actively in subsequent discussions under the methodology outlined in your letter dated 24 March 2005 and amended yesterday.

Mr. Zarif (Islamic Republic of Iran): We share the overwhelming sense of loss felt around the globe on the passing away of His Holiness Pope John Paul II. As President Khatami stated in his message,

> "Pope John Paul II, with his mastery of religious mysticism, philosophical contemplation and poetic and artistic creativity, exerted every effort for the triumph of truth, justice and peace."

I would also like to express our condolences to the people and the Government of Monaco on the demise of His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III.

We applaud the Secretary-General for his leadership of the Organization, his dedication to its principles and objectives and his courageous efforts to defend its integrity and to enhance its efficiency and its capacity to meet the needs and challenges of the new century. We owe him our deepest gratitude and unreserved support in these trying times.

The report of the Secretary-General entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" is an important initiative that deserves our thorough consideration and comprehensive deliberation. As one important input, together with others — particularly the views of Member States — it can help us proceed with the huge task ahead, resulting, one hopes, in genuinely meaningful and adequately balanced United Nations reform.

We are grateful to you, Mr. President, for leading the extensive consultations with Member States in the preparatory process for the September high-level plenary meeting, in keeping with the road map that you have outlined for us. My delegation, along with many others, participated in those deliberations in a genuine attempt to actively contribute to enhancing the efficiency of our unique and irreplaceable Organization.

We were indeed astonished that, to a very large extent, the Secretary-General's report neglected not only the views of the majority of Member States and important groups such as the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Group of 77 (G-77), but also the demand of the overwhelming majority of world public opinion for less coercion and more compassion. It is therefore our earnest hope that those aspirations and the views of Member States will be adequately considered in the remainder of that process. It is self-evident that the legitimacy and relevance of the eventual outcome will be a function of how thoroughly the reform will be deliberated upon and to what extent the process will be all-inclusive and transparent.

The report has diagnosed some of the diverse and interconnected threats afflicting the world community. However, by taking at face value the predominantly publicized interpretations of the threats emanating from one dominant global perspective, the report has lost sight of what is probably the more fundamental threat that lies at the root of the current international maladies, namely the propensity to resort to coercion and violence by State and non-State actors. Furthermore, and perhaps because of that failure, it is far from certain that the prescriptions presented by the report would, or even could, enhance the capacity of the international community to address the very threats that have been identified, or whether they would rectify the present shortcomings of the United Nations machinery or further entrench them. Success will largely depend upon our collective courage to question the feasibility and practicality — not to mention the legality and rationality — of the dominant interventionist paradigm and tendencies. Doing so would make the Organization truly responsive to the repeatedly articulated demands of the overwhelming majority of our peoples across the world, who have time and again rejected war, intervention and imposition.

My delegation has already presented its positions on major issues before us in our statements of 27 January and 23 February at the informal meetings of the General Assembly. We would also like to associate ourselves with the statements made by Malaysia and Jamaica on behalf of the NAM and the G-77. But may I take this opportunity to briefly address certain aspects and some recommendations of the report of the Secretary-General.

As the President correctly summarized in his concluding remarks on 24 February, there is broad consensus that Article 51 of the Charter should not be

reinterpreted or rewritten. Thus, it is indeed inexplicable to see that, contrary to the will of the majority and against the entire legislative history of the Article and post-Charter practice and *opinio juris*, Article 51 has in fact been reinterpreted in the report. Such a broad reinterpretation of the Article fails not only the test of legality but even the criterion of prudence, since providing a pseudo-legal excuse for unilateral pre-emptive action can only exacerbate the atmosphere of tension and crisis that has beleaguered the international community.

The report argues that "Lawyers have long recognized that [Article 51] covers an imminent attack as well as one that has already happened." (*A/59/2005, para. 124*) It is evident that, from a purely legal perspective, nothing can be further from the letter or the spirit of the Charter or the opinion of independent jurists. Various judgments of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in various cases have emphasized that measures in self-defence are legitimate only after an armed attack occurs. Article 51 in no way covers imminent threats, and international law does not confer any legitimacy on the dangerous doctrine of pre-emption. Even from the standpoint of politics and prudence, which presumably the report attempts to address, if that dangerous license is infused into the practice of the United Nations, it will lead to greater resort to violence in the international arena by opening the way for major Powers, as well as regional bullies, to wage wars against others under the pretext of self-defence against a variety of assumptions and perceived threats that can be easily and flexibly described as imminent.

The international community has seen far too many cases of resort to the excuse of imminent threat as justification for aggression to allow it to be recognized as a license for war under the Charter —be it from the justifications used by Saddam Hussein for his aggression against Iran and Kuwait to the now discredited justifications presented for the more recent military adventurisms. An attempt to broaden the license to legalized coercion is in itself indicative of the failure to recognize the root causes of the current international crisis, that is, militarism and the propensity to resort to exclusion, coercion and violence on the part of States as well as non-State actors.

Turning to disarmament and non-proliferation, the report contains a number of important suggestions that need adequate scrutiny. We concur that the current threats to international peace and security arising from the continued existence of thousands of nuclear warheads in the stockpiles of nuclear-weapon States "entails a unique responsibility" (*ibid., para. 98*) for nuclear-weapon States. Indeed, the crisis of confidence and compliance with regard to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) originated in the non-compliance and discriminatory practices of nuclear-weapon States over the past 35 years. However, the report fails to place the blame where it is due. It is even more regrettable that the report has failed to address the recent plans for the development of new nuclear weapons and new doctrines for their use against non-nuclear-weapon States.

The report prescribes the addition of new discriminatory restrictions on access to peaceful nuclear technology, which will, in turn, lead to a further categorization of haves and have-nots within the NPT. However, it neglects the fact that any greater reward for non-membership in the NPT or further disruption of the balance between rights and obligations of NPT members under the non-proliferation regime will lead to its disintegration rather than the intended strengthening.

The report also makes reference to a discriminatory and politically motivated initiative outside the framework of the United Nations and the non-proliferation regime, which undermines both and can achieve only — if it can achieve anything — possibly the political objectives of that initiative. In that regard, the approach that has been accepted by the membership of the Assembly is, in the words of resolution 59/69, the "promotion of multilateralism".

Also, in referring to the issue of missiles, the report should have taken into account the resolutions of the United Nations on missiles that have called for consideration of the issue in all its aspects.

Combating terrorism as a multifaceted global menace requires a global, inclusive and comprehensive approach. Terrorism is a heinous and perverted product of the global order, and the associated mentality glorifies military might as the source of legitimacy and denigrates the principles of international law, ethics and morality as cumbersome constrictions on the exercise of power. Terrorism can, and must be, destroyed, first and foremost by reversing the logic of violence and coercion and changing the mentalities and perceptions that might makes right. It certainly cannot

be eradicated — indeed it can only flourish — by further entrenching such a mentality through removing the limited existing restraints on the use of military might and portraying a picture that law, one way or another, must submit and conform to the reality of power. Approaches to terrorism focusing wholly on military, police and intelligence measures therefore risk undermining efforts to promote the role of law and human rights and alienate large parts of the world's population, thereby weakening the potential for collective action against terrorism.

To be effective, any anti-terrorism endeavour or initiative, rather than addressing only selected aspects of that threat, should be a broad-based approach to adequately addressing issues such as the root causes of terrorism and the double standards by which some terrorist groups are being treated. It should also consider proper mechanisms to rescue that much abused term from those who use it as a pejorative term for any dissent from their policies.

In fighting terrorism, the rule of international law, as well as the basic principles of human rights and humanitarian law, must be strictly observed. In that context, we consider the Secretary-General's proposal to create a special rapporteur who would report to the Commission on Human Rights on the compatibility of counter-terrorism measures with international human rights laws, to be a positive and helpful initiative.

The threat of organized crime is no less pressing than the menace of terrorism. Drug trafficking, as a clear manifestation of organized crime, is closely linked to terrorism, affects the security of all States and contributes to civil wars. It often serves as the main source of financing for many terrorist groups. It is regrettable that this obvious threat has been neglected in the report.

Many delegations in the course of our deliberations underlined the imperative of recognizing the increasing threat posed by mutually reinforcing phobias, leading to a catastrophic eventuality of a clash between civilizations and cultures. It was emphasized by many that this phenomenon is today serving as a breeding ground for extremism and terrorism and needs to be duly recognized and properly addressed in any effort to reform the United Nations. It is indeed astonishing that, in the report, that major and emerging security threat has been totally neglected and that the paradigm of dialogue among civilizations, already approved by this Assembly as the most efficient means to tackle the growing threat of a clash, has been overlooked.

If undue pressure had not made it impossible to assess more objectively the threats that face the international community, it would not have been difficult to agree that the lofty objectives of larger freedom, development, security and human rights for all would be much better served through the promotion of dialogue, rather than providing a more comfortable license for pre-emption and the use of force.

The report also accepts the vague and highly controversial concept of "responsibility to protect", which has been the subject of a wide range of interpretations. Clearly, the international community cannot and should not sit idly by when faced with the heinous crimes of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. However, as indicated in the report of the High-level Panel, one of the main reasons for the failures of the United Nations in tackling such crimes in certain cases has been the lack of will on the part of certain major Powers, which have prevented the United Nations from taking appropriate measures in those well-known cases. Therefore, it is not clear that the introduction of a new concept, rather than a more faithful implementation of the United Nations Charter in that regard, has the first-order priority in the quest to meet such threats. There is a grave concern that the concept of "responsibility to protect" could be invoked by certain countries to pursue their own political agenda and that, through that idea, some parts of the world may become potential theatres for their intervention.

Reference should also be made here to the general demand of the international community for respect for sovereignty. We must demystify that concept and apply the same standards of modernization in its interpretation. In other words, sovereignty cannot be restricted, under the guise of conforming to the needs of the twenty-first century, to allow intervention, while at the same time the same sovereignty is expanded to its nineteenth century parameters to relax the restrictions on the use of force and allow pre-emption.

We share the Secretary-General's feeling on the diminishing credibility of the Commission on Human Rights. We also concur with the Secretary-General that human rights is a crucial aspect of the work of the

United Nations, while further believing that the politicization of the Commission's work has risked engaging nations in a global clash of cultures between North and South and between East and West. Moreover, the Commission on Human Rights has been a textbook case of political manipulation through gross selectivity and the application of double standards over the past several decades.

To restore the credibility of the human rights machinery and to best combine its efficiency with legitimacy, concrete steps must be taken to reduce selective approaches. A pertinent question arises as to whether the proposed human rights council would be able to rectify the present shortcomings of the United Nations human rights machinery. In our view, such a council could further polarize and politicize the human rights system and, in turn, further marginalize the developing countries in yet another important forum within the United Nations.

The establishment of an intergovernmental peacebuilding commission within the framework of the United Nations is an important idea that merits careful consideration. Such a new body, if established, would need to perform its important duties under the purview of the relevant organs of the United Nations, especially the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. As enumerated by the Secretary-General in his report, such a body's functions should be strictly confined to post-conflict activities.

Of course, the United Nations should play a significant role in conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding to save millions of lives. It could have prevented the deaths of millions of people in different conflicts. Therefore, we should ensure that the United Nations has an effective capacity for peacekeeping operations to meet the growing demands. To that end, we associate ourselves with the Secretary-General's view on the necessity of strengthening the United Nations peacekeeping capacity and support the appropriate measures that would serve that purpose.

The rule of law, as an essential element of durable peace in countries emerging from conflict, should be respected by all relevant actors in a peacekeeping operation, especially by the United Nations peacekeepers and peacebuilders, who have a solemn responsibility to respect the law themselves and, especially, to respect the rights of the people whom it is their mission to help. In that regard, we strongly support the Secretary-General's efforts to strengthen the internal capacity of the United Nations to exercise oversight of peacekeeping operations in order to prevent any misconduct in the future.

We welcome the Secretary-General's proposal on the need for the completion of the Doha Round and his emphasis on the need for the round to fulfil its development promise. We are also glad that the report recognizes the need for the international trade and financial systems to be more inclusive of the developing countries' interests through their enhanced participation in the decision-making processes of those institutions. However, some of the huge stumbling blocks in the process of integrating the developing countries into the international trade system have not received proper attention. For example, the report does not touch upon the need for removing political barriers in making the World Trade Organization a universal body paving the way for all developing countries to benefit from international trade. The report equally falls short in proposing ways of addressing unilateral sanctions.

While the report tries to have a comprehensive approach to global environmental degradation, it clearly fails to provide broad recommendations to address the challenge. The relevant recommendations of the report are focused on only three issues: energy, international environmental governance (IEG) and the Kyoto Protocol, and, thus, are not all-encompassing. The report does not provide any proposals for addressing the problems arising from the export of polluting technologies from developed to developing countries, the conduct of transnational companies and the issue of corporate responsibility and accountability. In regard to the Kyoto Protocol, we expected the report, instead of proposing further commitments for developing countries, to call on the big emitters of green house gases to join the Kyoto Protocol and to urge developed country parties to the Protocol to take immediate and effective measures to meet their mitigation commitment in the first commitment period.

The proposal of the Secretary-General on the governance of the global environment requires an in-depth and thorough analysis, since there are differences of view with regard to the root causes of global environmental problems. The issue of international environmental governance, including a new global entity or agency on environment, was dealt with

comprehensively in the IEG process leading to the Johannesburg Summit. Choosing among various available options, that process proposed that that the Summit consider the important but complex issue of universal membership; and the Summit, in turn, mandated the General Assembly to consider, at its sixty-first session, the issue of universal membership of the United Nations Environment Programme's Governing Council. We look forward to the active participation of all countries in the discussion of universal membership of the Governing Council at the sixty-first session of the General Assembly.

It is imperative to reform the Economic and Social Council in order to enhance its efficiency and responsiveness and to enable it to meet the emerging challenges. The proposals contained in the report which seek to have the Economic and Social Council focus more on development issues are worth considering. However, these should not alter the mandate or the scope of the work of the Economic and Social Council, as set out in the Charter. Care should be taken to strengthen the Economic and Social Council and to avoid downgrading it to a functional commission. We should bear in mind that the Economic and Social Council is entrusted with system-wide coordination responsibility, as well as with mandates relating to social, economic, human rights and environmental issues.

On reform of the Security Council, we have noted that the Secretary-General has wisely abstained from directly advocating any models for increasing the membership of the Council. However, the lack of reference to the working methods of the Council — despite the insistence of the majority and against the backdrop of the large amount of work done by the Open-ended Working Group on the reform of the Security Council — is unjustifiable. Encroachment by the Council on issues that fall within the purview of other organs of the United Nations, particularly the General Assembly, has regrettably become commonplace. Nonetheless, the report has not only ignored this burning challenge, but has also recommended entrusting the Council with new mandates, which would further exacerbate the situation.

On the revitalization of the General Assembly, which is undoubtedly at the heart of the reform of the Organization, my delegation is of the view that this should be perceived as a dynamic and ongoing process. The two features of this process — enhancing the authority and role of the General Assembly and improving its working methods — should be pursued simultaneously. By the same token, we concur with the Secretary-General that the General Assembly, as the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations, must become more effective through an enhanced contribution to the Organization's activities. However, that may not necessarily be realized by streamlining its agenda and committee structure or by reversing its decision-making process. Rather, it is imperative to restore the powers of the Assembly derived from the Charter, particularly through leaving areas which are within its purview — namely, law-making and norm-setting— to this most democratic forum of the Organization.

Before concluding, I would like to emphasize that, in my delegation's view, it is the sole responsibility of United Nations Member States to decide on any new measures concerning the United Nations and its reform, and that the General Assembly, as the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the Organization, has a unique role in this regard. We reiterate our pledge of full cooperation with you, Mr. President, as you continue to lead us in this process.

Mr. Burian (Slovakia): Slovakia fully associates itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union. We also fully associate ourselves with the intervention made yesterday by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Estonia on behalf of the States members of the Group of Eastern European States. My delegation wishes to add several brief observations and comments in its national capacity.

We very much welcome the right and proper emphasis that the Secretary-General, in his report (A/59/2005), has put on three great purposes and pillars of the work of the United Nations: security, development and human rights. My country, through its recent experience of social and economic transformation processes, is a clear example of the fact that major progress on one of the three pillars can be achieved only if substantive steps are also taken in the other two. Also of particular relevance, as we can testify, is the Secretary-General's argument about the crucial importance of the rule of law, which, together with its successful implementation, is the necessary prerequisite for sustainable reform and key advancement with regard to all three pillars.

In line with efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, Slovakia strongly agrees with the Secretary-General that each country has primary responsibility for its own development — strengthening governance, combating corruption and putting in place policies and investments to drive private-sector-led growth and to maximize domestic resources available to fund national development strategies. By adopting effective measures in those areas, Slovakia has gradually moved from being a recipient of development assistance in the early 1990s to its current situation as an emerging donor country that is now providing official development assistance to about 14 partner countries in the Balkans, Asia and Africa. We have been supporting those countries' institutional capacities, infrastructure and living and environmental conditions, as well as sharing our own experience of the ongoing transformation of our economic and social system. An open and equitable trading system is of the utmost importance for economic growth and poverty reduction. Slovakia, as a member of the European Union, also provides duty-free and quota-free market access for all exports from least developed countries.

My country, which is fully committed to its legal obligations and to respect for human rights, welcomes the Secretary-General's proposals focused on the strengthening of the United Nations human rights system and on the improvement of the institutional framework for human rights. We strongly support the idea of strengthening the capability of the human rights bodies in the field of implementation, effective promotion and monitoring of adopted measures. We also support efforts aimed at increasing respect for and the credibility of the human rights bodies. In this regard, Slovakia supports the strengthening of the role and the improvement of the financing of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and looks forward to the High Commissioner's upcoming presentation of his plan of action.

The close relationship between security and human rights also requires improved interaction between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Security Council. We consider the proposed transformation of the Commission on Human Rights into a responsive and efficient standing Human Rights Council to be an initiative that merits further consideration and elaboration, especially with regard to the new council's membership and statute. We think that having the General Assembly elect the members would contribute to making the council a more representative and respected body.

In the area of the institutional reform of the United Nations system, we support and welcome the proposed concept of three councils, each equally important. We also wish to express our strong support for the idea of creating a Peacebuilding Commission. We see it as a prerequisite for doing away with the existing institutional gap. The urgent need to maintain peace and security in post-conflict situations and to achieve long-term sustainable social and economic development must be addressed appropriately.

As we have repeatedly stated on previous occasions, Slovakia strongly advocates reform of the Security Council. First of all, the Council needs to be made more representative, more effective and more transparent. Its working methods need to be enhanced. In that context, we also believe that the Security Council needs to be expanded in both categories of its membership: permanent and non-permanent. The present membership structure is clearly unbalanced and does not truly reflect the composition of the United Nations or the principle of equitable geographical representation. We wish to reiterate our explicit position that an expanded Security Council should include Germany and Japan as new permanent members.

In that regard, Slovakia finds it inappropriate that neither of the two models proposed for Security Council reform by the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change and referred to in the recent report of the Secretary-General reflects the existing structure of the regional groups. I refer specifically to the existence of the Group of Eastern European States. We wish to emphasize that all existing regional groups should be maintained and that they should be able to nominate candidates for membership of an expanded Security Council.

In conclusion, I wish to assure the Assembly of my Government's keen support for the reform proposals so well outlined in the Secretary-General's recent report. We are committed to making the September summit a success by engaging in detailed discussions and negotiations with other Member States, thereby assembling all the building blocks necessary to make the United Nations a more effective and more dynamic Organization that is able to effectively

address the global challenges of the twenty-first century.

Ms. Tahir-Kheli (United States of America): I should like to begin by expressing to our colleagues from the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See, our colleagues from the Permanent Mission of Poland and indeed to all those who looked to Pope John Paul II as a spiritual guide my country's deepest sympathies on his passing. He was an inspiration to the devotion of people of all faiths throughout the world and a force for good everywhere he travelled. He will be greatly missed. I also express to the ruling family and the people of the Principality of Monaco my country's deepest sympathies on the passing of Prince Rainier III. We share in the mourning of his family and his countrymen, and we pray that they will find consolation in his formidable legacy.

The United States appreciates the work of the Secretary-General and your efforts, Mr. President, to achieve reform of the United Nations. I am grateful for the opportunity to present my country's views on this effort.

At no time has the world been more in need of an effective United Nations than it is today. As we work towards the achievement of the Millennium Summit's Development Goals, as we work for peace around the world, especially in Africa and the Middle East and as we confront the challenges of terrorism and the urgent need to stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction, we need a United Nations that lives up to its high ideals, a United Nations that acts effectively to implement real solutions, and a United Nations whose efficiency and integrity are beyond question.

We welcome the Secretary-General's positive emphasis on the importance of promoting freedom and respect for human rights and human dignity, advancing democracy and strengthening the rule of law. We appreciate the Secretary-General's support for the creation of a United Nations democracy fund, as proposed by President Bush last year. When it is created, the democracy fund will be instrumental, as President Bush has said, in laying the foundation of democracy by instituting the rule of law and independent courts, a free press, political parties and trade unions.

We also welcome the call made in the report of the Secretary-General (A/59/2005) for the creation of a Peacebuilding Commission to improve the Organization's post-conflict peacebuilding capabilities — a proposal that merits serious and careful consideration. There appears to be broad support for the establishment of such a commission, and we want to work with like-minded countries to ensure that it can fulfil its important mission. The Peacebuilding Commission could become a centrepiece of the United Nations to help strengthen post-conflict States and, as such, could become a key component of peace and security in the twenty-first century. It should be answerable to the Security Council. We recognize that its structure and organization must reach beyond the Security Council. It is vital that such a commission include in its membership both those with the most at stake and those with the most to contribute. We are prepared to discuss those issues.

The United States supports the Secretary-General's recommendation to replace the Commission on Human Rights with a smaller, more effective Human Rights Council and to have that council report directly to the General Assembly. Because we agree about the need to improve the capacity of her Office to promote rule of law on the ground in countries, we look forward to the plan of action from the High Commissioner for Human Rights. It will assist all Member States in assessing how best to ensure that critical human-rights work not be hamstrung by bloc voting or by those States that systematically violate human rights.

We also appreciate the emphasis that the Secretary-General's report places on dealing with the issue of terrorism, particularly including its call on all States that have not yet done so to accede to the 12 existing counter-terrorism conventions and its call for the completion — without delay — of an international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism. We welcome the position that there is no justification for the targeting and killing of civilians, and we continue to believe that a definition of terrorism needs to exclude State military operations. We also recognize that any definition or other language to be included in the comprehensive convention on terrorism will need to be worked out by States in the context of the negotiations on that convention.

We welcome the Secretary-General's acknowledgement that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is a real and growing threat. We also welcome the Secretary-General's reaffirmation of the importance of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the specific reference to

the crisis of confidence and compliance facing the Treaty. States failing to abide by their treaty obligations have created a serious challenge for the non-proliferation regime that must be addressed.

The United States is pleased to see the support given to the Proliferation Security Initiative and to Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) as useful new initiatives to combat the threat of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including by non-State actors. We also welcome the report's call for universal adoption of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Model Additional Protocol and its enrichment and reprocessing programmes because of the proliferation dangers posed by such weapons. We support the report's focus on national controls against delivery systems for weapons of mass destruction, as the proliferation of missiles and related technologies to unstable countries is an area of great concern to the United States.

The United States also welcomes the report's emphasis on additional steps to address conventional weapons that are destabilizing. We believe, however, that the discussion of nuclear States as bearing the greatest burden for addressing the proliferation and disarmament challenges facing the international community is incorrectly cast.

We welcome the Secretary-General's assertion that Article 51 of the Charter should not be changed. The Secretary-General's report makes the key point that a State need not wait until it is actually attacked in order to use force in self-defence, which is to say that there is a right of anticipatory self-defence in appropriate circumstances. Anticipatory action is an element of the inherent right of self-defence that remains lawful under the United Nations Charter. As we have indicated previously, today that right of self-defence must be understood and applied in the context of the new threats posed by terrorism and weapons of mass destruction that the Secretary-General highlights in his report.

Economic development is of great concern to all United Nations Members. Indeed, President Bush has made clear the United States commitment to sound economic development. We reaffirm and commit ourselves anew to implementing the development consensus achieved at Monterrey and at Johannesburg and to the agreed goals of the Millennium Declaration.

We fully agree with the Secretary-General that developing countries should recommit themselves to taking primary responsibility for their own development by strengthening governance, combating corruption and putting in place policies and investments to drive private sector growth. World leaders acknowledged that principle of national responsibility at the 2002 Monterrey Conference on Financing for Development. The great promise of the Monterrey Consensus was that, if developing countries implemented good governance and sound policies emphasizing the rule of law, respect for human rights and a liberal, market-based economic structure, the resources that they need for development would follow — from trade, from foreign and domestic private investment, from sustainable debt and from official development assistance.

The Monterrey Consensus also called upon developed countries to support developing countries making efforts to improve their institutions and policies. The United States pledged to increase foreign assistance by 50 per cent above the 2000 levels by the year 2006 and met that pledge three years early. Last year, our development assistance exceeded its 2000 level by 90 per cent. The United States Millennium Challenge Account initiative will support poor countries that are committed to governing justly, investing in their people and encouraging economic freedom. We believe that this approach will make aid more effective. The Millennium Challenge Account initiative was developed to meet our commitments under the Monterrey Consensus, an approach endorsed by the Secretary-General. That integrated approach is far more promising than insistence on official development assistance supply targets. We urge other donors to provide increased aid to developing countries that implement sound, transparent and accountable national development strategies.

Like the Secretary-General, we too recognize the special needs of Africa. Under the auspices of the Millennium Challenge Account, we are contributing substantially to poverty reduction through economic growth and good governance. The Africa Growth and Opportunity Act has brought investment and jobs in many African nations and has helped establish necessary commercial linkages for those nations to enjoy greater economic opportunity. We remain committed to building an expanded and comprehensive response to HIV/AIDS and call upon the international

community to join us in providing the resources needed for that effort.

In addition, we urge World Trade Organization members to complete the Doha Round by 2006, if possible. We caution, however, that finding the right structure for open and free markets — one that will contribute positively to increased development and opportunity — is more important than the constraints of a calendar.

Further, debt sustainability is about a country's ability to pay in the context of becoming an active partner in global capital markets. We must also bear in mind the role that debt plays as a financing tool for development; debt financing is appropriate only where there is a reasonable expectation that loans will be repaid. The approach outlined in the report would set back many countries' progress towards achieving or regaining access to capital markets.

Recent investigations of mismanagement and wrongdoing, including in peacekeeping operations, are cause for concern and have underscored the need for greater transparency and accountability within the United Nations. We therefore strongly support strengthening the authority and the independence of the Office of Internal Oversight Services as a means to accomplish that.

The United States supports Security Council reform provided it enhances the effectiveness of the Council. We remain open to considering all proposals and will evaluate them against that benchmark. As the reform process proceeds, the United States would like to move forward on the basis of broad consensus along the lines we have previously stated and without artificial deadlines.

As we prepare for what will be a very busy September, I would like to reiterate our position that the high-level event to be held on the margins of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly should not become the focal point for United Nations reform. We continue to believe that its principal focus should be on the implementation of the goals of the Millennium Declaration.

We want to move forward now on United Nations reforms for which there is broad agreement. We should also recognize that there are areas where agreement will not be reached quickly or easily, and we should not be bound by artificial deadlines. Given the historic significance and the complexities of the enterprise that we are embarking on, it would be unrealistic to adopt a package approach to United Nations reform and development goals. The United States believes that we should instead approach this task in a pragmatic way, building consensus around reforms we all agree are needed and then progressively working to achieve more difficult changes.

Mr. President, you have the commitment of the United States to work constructively and cooperatively on all issues of United Nations reform. To that end, we will continue our process of review to identify any additional areas of possible reform, and we encourage others to do the same.

In closing, I want to reiterate that the United States remains committed to the United Nations and feels it is critically important for Member States to help the United Nations meet the challenges and the promise of the twenty-first century.

Mr. Motoc (Romania): Before all else, allow me, on behalf of Romania, to join in the expression of heartfelt condolences at the passing of His Holiness Pope John Paul II, the first pope ever to have visited a predominantly Orthodox country such as mine. We also share in the grief at the passing of His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III. I convey our deepest sympathy to the ruling family and the people of the Principality of Monaco.

Mr. President, we thank you for convening these plenary meetings on the Secretary-General's report entitled "In larger freedom" (A/59/2005) and for your leadership in providing us with a procedural framework in the lead-up to September's United Nations summit.

Romania aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Luxembourg presidency on behalf of the European Union and obviously supports the Eastern European Group's statement prepared by the Estonian presidency for the present month. We ourselves have also discussed reform-related issues at some length on previous occasions in plenary meetings. I believe that there is no point in taking up again those points which are already a matter of record.

Let me say straightforwardly that Romania values the Secretary-General's vision of reform. The "In larger freedom" report is a remarkable political and intellectual blueprint for putting that vision to work

and a good account of what we all aim at: effective multilateralism.

The report is also an excellent exercise in mainstreaming the flow of ideas, options and proposals that is usually expected to flourish at times of major change. We would therefore be well advised to take it as the platform upon which consensus can be achieved on decisions that meet the expectations surrounding the September anniversary summit. If time — the time of political opportunities — is a factor here, we should now focus on elaborating further or fine-tuning some of its concepts, so as to enable the delicate balance that has been achieved in the report to be maintained and not disturbed.

There is indeed a compelling harmony and symmetry and a logical attractiveness in the report. Its most praiseworthy achievement is that it properly recalibrates the relationship among the key goals of the Organization — development, security and human rights — and the relationship between the corresponding pillars of the United Nations architecture.

We agree with the general approach taken by the report, which is based on the triad of development, freedom and peace, as their interlinkage is of a defining nature for the current international agenda.

The report highlights the urgency of achieving the Millennium Development Goals and contains a number of practical recommendations. We agree with the conclusion reached in the Secretary-General's report that developing countries should recommit themselves to improving governance and implementing development strategies, and that developed countries should undertake to support such efforts. We welcome and support those proposals as well as those on strengthening basic health systems, enhancing international response mechanisms to major infectious diseases, and establishing a worldwide early-warning system for all natural hazards.

We regard the proposal to establish a Peacebuilding Commission as particularly useful and look forward to considering a more fully elaborated proposal on this topic.

As impressive an achievement as the report might be, we, as representatives of Member States, also have to actively engage in the process of adapting the United Nations to new realities, including through further refining our assessment of the proposals made by the Secretary-General, by submitting them to a series of crucial tests. One such test — probably the most fundamental one — is whether the reform envisaged in the report does more than adapt the United Nations to the challenges and opportunities of the post-cold-war era. Will it be able to win the hearts and minds of our peoples and fire up their imagination once again, as was the case at San Francisco? Will it be a satisfactory answer to their hopes and dreams, and will it elicit a genuine recommitment to the idea of a world Organization?

Will this reform bring the United Nations closer to our regions, to our countries, to our peoples? It is the answers to such questions that we need to convey to our Governments, to our constituencies, to our opinion-makers.

There is no doubt that the goals of the United Nations represent our finest ideals and aspirations. The question is, to what extent can the institutional framework we possess today really deliver on these common objectives and values? While the report does an impressive job of examining ways to reorganize key bodies of the United Nations in the context of a more integrated matrix, it does not — as the Secretary-General himself cannot — contribute significantly to the issue of improving the performance of the General Assembly. This is the central body, the flagship of the Organization, the only venue where we are all represented. The measure of the performance and image of the United Nations is inextricably tied to the capabilities of its General Assembly. It is therefore up to us — each and every Member State — to enhance those capabilities and to make the General Assembly's work more focused and more relevant to contemporary issues.

Another test relates to the report's — and, implicitly, the reform's — level of ambition. More than a few of our colleagues have noted that many of the ideas that garnered significant support in the course of our previous consultations do not seem to have found their way into the report. It is only reasonable, therefore, for us to ask ourselves whether the report is more, or less, ambitious than those common denominators identified in the debates on reform held so far.

In terms of the process, we could at this time benefit from greater clarity in the decision-making that takes us from this point — at which we have a whole

set of valuable ideas on reform — to the point where appropriate draft decisions are set out on the tables of our leaders in September.

Likewise, Mr. President, we appreciate the valuable facilitation process you have set in motion, and we support the initiative to devote dedicated efforts to promoting the reform package outside of New York, including with the valuable assistance of highly qualified special envoys of the Secretary-General.

In recent discussions in the Eastern European Group, however, we could not but note with disappointment that, once again, those envoys have been selected from each of the other four regional groupings. None comes from Eastern Europe, and no appeal was made, to our knowledge, to the 22 delegations making up the Group to put forward suitable names. We are, unfortunately, compelled to recall once again that the High-level Panel comprised 16 personalities, only one of whom came from our region. Have we in Eastern Europe completely run short of personalities who could be of assistance to the United Nations, including by bringing the Organization's agenda closer to our people?

Now is as good a time as any to state clearly that the United Nations is still working on the basis of five, not four, regional groups. The High-level Panel's proposals on mergers between the regional groups have not been taken up in the "In larger freedom" report; they have been met with broad reluctance by delegations, and, in any case, it is not for an expert panel to decide how Member States are to organize themselves, especially when the latter have not been consulted.

So let us acknowledge clearly that that proposal is a thing of the past and let us seriously start thinking afresh, bearing in mind the fact that 22 States Members of the Organization are watching the reform process with the same critical eye, the same expectations of fair and just treatment, and the same sense of entitlement as their colleagues from other regional groups.

That leads me to revisit the question of Security Council reform and to state once again that the Eastern European Group has to be considered as an integral part of any expansion scheme. For countries like Romania — which also have to take part in the process — expansion of the Council can be supported, in terms of structure, provided it reflects the increased contribution of the Eastern European Group to United Nations activities, and, in terms of substance, provided it brings us at least one inch closer to better decision-making in a more representative and authoritative Council, and one inch closer to a fairer recognition of contributions to the safeguarding of international peace and security.

Our expectations are indeed minimal. One additional elected seat would indeed be a very modest allocation, since in that case we would end up with one permanent and two elected seats, which, according to basic arithmetic, adds up to much less than one fifth of the number of countries represented in an expanded Council. If that is not a spirit of compromise, if that is not a constructive approach, then I do not know what would be. In any case, before we aim to accommodate the legitimate aspirations of each country, let us respond properly to, at least, the aspirations of the main regional constituencies of the Organization.

The framework laid down in the "In larger freedom" document with respect to reform of the Security Council is certainly a step in the right direction compared with previous efforts. We appreciate also the initiatives of those countries that are working actively to seek the widest basis for agreement on the way forward with regard to expanding the Security Council. We will embark upon the next stage of the process without preconceived ideas but with a firm stand on the points that are fundamental to our Group and to our countries. We recognize that major contributors to the primary functions of the Security Council need to be acknowledged in the process. At the same time, a future formula for an enlarged Council should have as many — if not all — of the Member States and their peoples on board as stakeholders. Romania will support ideas and initiatives that can effect change in that regard.

We agree that the overall reform of the United Nations should not be dependant upon the ability to take decisions on the enlargement of the Security Council. Among the elements in the report entitled "In larger freedom" that we think need to be and can be further developed, Romania favours a broader and deeper reflection in the reform package of the outline of the comprehensive prevention of and fight against terrorism, of the nexus between that scourge and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and of

the enhanced relation we think needs to be worked out between the United Nations and regional organizations.

On the latter, it is impressive to see the foresight of the founding fathers of the United Nations when they drafted Chapter VIII of the Charter, since regionalization was then a far cry from today's realities of robust organizations and intense integrative processes. However, we are still not making sufficient use of the potential inherent in the cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. If we were, the conjunction of complementary resources available today in that relationship would be sufficient to adequately manage and even put off all the crises and tensions confronting us. What is true in the area of security also applies in other dimensions of global activity, such as development.

Romania, which promotes United Nations regional cooperation in conflict situations as a flagship theme of its elected tenure in the Security Council, is willing to be helpful in further developing the ideas contained in the latest report and is prepared to come up with a concept paper addressing issues such as the following.

First, how would it be possible to generate new integrationist processes where appropriate and make existing ones more meaningful or intense as a result of the emulation potential that is inherent in global-regional interaction.

Secondly, how can we ensure that the very provisions of Charter VIII are actually observed in the first place and implemented in a more orderly manner, not leaving everything to empirical solutions. For instance, the United Nations has, more or less implicitly, subcontracted to regional organizations the solution of a series of conflicts that have not subsequently been subjected to any oversight by the United Nations, as prescribed by the Charter, with the consequence that those conflicts have largely been forgotten or, at best, subjected to complacent reassurances that they at least remain frozen and have not yet reignited, as if that approach should be seen as politically or morally tenable.

Thirdly, recognizing that regional organizations are increasingly playing a separate role alongside individual States, the contributions of the latter to action taken by the former under a United Nations mandate should also be recognized as a contribution to United Nations peacekeeping or to peacebuilding proper.

In the long run, it is important that we at the United Nations do not conceive relations with the most active and effective of regional or subregional organizations in competitive terms but that, rather, we seek to find how the United Nations can broaden its reach, strengthen its impact and ultimately bring its agenda closer to peoples' specific needs and concerns by interacting with and supporting regional undertakings and ensuring the overall consistency of those processes.

Mr. Oshima (Japan): On behalf of the Government and people of Japan, allow me first to express our heartfelt condolences upon the passing away of His Holiness Pope John Paul II and His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III of the Principality of Monaco. During the 26 years of his papacy, the late Pope strived consistently for world peace through mediation and conciliation for peaceful solutions of regional and internal conflicts, as well as for an easing of tension. He made great efforts to promote inter-faith dialogue. Upon his visit to Japan in 1981, His Holiness visited Hiroshima and Nagasaki and appealed for nuclear disarmament.

We appreciate the thoughtful plan of work and the consultation mechanism that you, Mr. President, have shown us for the preparation of the September summit, following the report of the Secretary-General entitled "In larger freedom". Sixty years on from the inception of our Organization, this coming September the Member States will be asked to take important decisions for its rejuvenation and change, for new commitments and empowerment that will make our Organization more effective and better equipped to deal with the problems of the twenty-first century. In that task of historic importance, my Government fully supports the Secretary-General and will work in close cooperation with you, Mr. President, and your facilitators.

My Government commends the efforts of the Secretary-General to present us with bold and concrete proposals that aim to strengthen the roles and function of the Organization around its core missions and objectives, namely, development, peace and security, the rule of law and the protection of the vulnerable. We also commend his effort to present us with a matching set of concrete proposals and ideas on institutional reform, in particular that of the Security Council. It is

now up to Member States to move, in collective action and with boldness and speed, on the recommendations laid before us as a broad integrated package. Out of deep commitment to the United Nations, and working under your wise guidance, Mr. President, Japan will spare no effort to find agreement that will benefit all Member States.

We strongly support the central thrust of the report of the Secretary-General, namely, that development, security and human rights are closely interlinked and must be advanced together. That corresponds exactly to the spirit and concept we have been advancing -- that of human security — which holds that it is only through the protection and empowerment of individuals that the freedom to live in dignity can be achieved.

Today I would like to limit my remarks to a few general points that my Government considers of particular importance. I look forward to detailed discussions later in the month in the cluster-by-cluster meetings.

First, on development, which is clustered under the theme "freedom from want", no issue deserves closer attention than the hardship faced by many hundreds of millions living in extreme poverty and destitution in many parts of the world, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. The international development agenda is broader than the Millennium Development Goals, but the Goals must figure as the most pressing priority. Japan is strongly committed to contributing to their realization, working with the countries concerned and with bilateral and multilateral donors and development partners, both within and outside the United Nations.

In addition to the recommendations of the Secretary-General, in our approach to the Millennium Development Goals we will be guided by the discussions held and the agreements reached on that issue at numerous international conferences, including those held at Monterrey and Johannesburg. In terms of priority sectors geared towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, Japan has played a leading donor role in the areas of education, water, public health and the environment. We will continue our efforts, with special focus on those areas.

Furthermore, in the belief that nation-building begins with capacity-building, Japan attaches importance to assistance for capacity-building, particularly in the areas of education and training. Advancing capacity-building is essential in order to promote a sound sense of ownership, which is indeed indispensable for achieving both the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable development.

On the important question of financing for development, we have argued that resource mobilization, to be effective and sustainable, must cover not only official development assistance (ODA), but also all other available sources, such as those available through trade and investment and those from domestic financial resources in the recipient countries. East Asia's development experience offers an interesting example in that a happy combination of development financing that consisted of ODA, trade and private investment produced an environment in which healthy economic growth and sustainable development were made possible, which in turn helped to reduce the population living in poverty by more than 200 million over a decade.

Japan's strong commitment to development aid and cooperation through its ODA remains unchanged. Backed by that commitment, Japan has contributed about one fifth of the worldwide volume of ODA over the past 10 years. From humanitarian relief, such as that provided in the wake of the recent tsunami disaster in the Indian Ocean, to Millennium Development Goal-related undertakings and international development beyond the Goals, Japan will continue its efforts to be the world's major donor. We will strive to increase the level of ODA for the purpose of achieving the Millennium Development Goals, taking proposals by the Secretary-General seriously into consideration.

For international development and the promotion of the Millennium Development Goals, cooperation with non-United Nations actors, such as the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization, is also important. The G-8 summit will focus this year on Africa and we will be working closely with our partners in the G-8, including on development financing and debt relief. I wish also to note that, later this month, the Asia-Africa summit will be held in Indonesia, marking the fiftieth anniversary of the historic Bandung Conference of 1955. Japan will announce its position with regard to strengthening Asia-Africa cooperation, including South-South cooperation in the development area.

Concerning the threats posed to humanity by natural disasters, we commend the Secretary-General for stressing in his report the importance of measures for disaster reduction and early warnings. We believe that the international community, through the United Nations, needs effectively to address that problem of huge concern to a number of countries, particularly in the developing world.

On the issue of peace and security, clustered under "freedom from fear", we welcome the concrete proposals by the Secretary-General to strengthen multilateral frameworks for disarmament and non-proliferation. My Government has taken a number of initiatives, in close cooperation with other members of the international community, in that area. We support the universalization of the disarmament and non-proliferation regimes, as well as instruments for the suppression of terrorism, strengthening their effectiveness and ensuring their full implementation. We welcome the adoption last week of a draft international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism, the early agreement on which was no doubt facilitated by the Secretary-General's report.

On nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) will be held next month to review its implementation — a very important conference, as the NPT regime faces serious challenges. Through that Conference and other international forums, we will continue to take active initiatives in the promotion of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation out of a desire to contribute towards improving the security environment in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

We support the idea of a peacebuilding commission and hope that it will be one of the important outcomes of the September summit. Japan is keenly mindful of the importance of peacebuilding, as seen in its efforts to advocate the consolidation of peace and human security. We support the thrust of the Secretary-General's suggestion concerning the commission's composition and its functions, including drawing an equal number of members from both the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council to participate in the commission. We look forward to a detailed note from the Secretary-General, including on a peacebuilding support office.

Thirdly, concerning the freedom to live in dignity or the protection of the vulnerable and the rule of law, we commend the Secretary-General for raising the rule of law, human rights and democracy as one of the important pillars for the United Nations, along with development and peace and security. Japan embraces the assessment of the Secretary-General that, in light of the experience gained in the post-cold-war period, the time is now upon us to look into the issue of "responsibility to protect". However, even if military intervention as a last resort cannot be completely excluded, we are of the view that there are many instances in which measures other than military means can and should be exhausted by the international community to deal with a given situation, and that will have to be further explored. We need to re-emphasize here our concept of human security, to which I alluded before, that puts primary emphasis on the protection and empowerment of individuals as a basic guiding principle to realizing prevention and the consolidation of peace in post-conflict situations.

We agree with the emphasis that the Secretary-General's report places on human rights, making more robust the United Nations activities aimed at improving human rights situations all over the world, and we look forward to active discussions in that regard. Concerning the proposal for a human rights council, we share the key concerns that lie behind that proposal, while, at the same time, further discussions on the details are clearly needed.

Regarding institutional reform, the Secretary-General has put forward a number of important proposals and suggestions which all deserve careful, sympathetic study; they include proposals for the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Security Council and the Secretariat. We welcome those concrete and bold proposals.

Reform of the Security Council has been discussed for more than a decade now, and the time is ripe for action. The Secretary-General reiterates his belief that "no reform of the United Nations would be complete without reform of the Security Council" (*A/59/2005, para. 169*), and urges Member States to agree to take a decision before the summit in September. He also states that, although consensus would be preferable, if we are unable to reach consensus, "this must not become an excuse for postponing action" (*ibid., para. 170*). We fully support those views. History tells us that important progress is

made rarely through consensus, but through bold decisions. It should be recalled that the decision to expand the membership in the non-permanent category back in 1963 was made by vote.

We have argued for the expansion of the Security Council in both the permanent and non-permanent categories in order to make it more representative and capable of addressing current and future challenges more effectively. That position enjoys support from a large number of Member States, as their statements in the General Assembly have shown. That approach is reflected in model A. We also believe that developing countries would be represented better in an expanded Security Council, including with permanent seats. We welcome the African Union's recent agreement on its position based on the expansion in both categories, and we support the addition of two African States as new permanent members.

Against that backdrop, Japan, together with other like-minded countries, will move the process forward by putting forth a draft framework resolution by this summer, with necessary action to follow, in order to take a decision on the expansion of the Security Council. In that process, we naturally intend to work in close synchronization with you, Mr. President, and your facilitators so that a solution that will command the widest possible agreement can be arrived at on that long unsettled problem.

In expanding the Security Council, we should also address another important concern of Member States that has been debated for a long time and is ready for some harvesting, which is improving the working methods of the Security Council. We hope to move on that issue as well, in close consultation with all interested Member States.

Concerning the reform of the Economic and Social Council, we believe the reform effort should be guided by the concern to make that important body more responsive to focused discussions on issues that are of high urgency and priority. Such reform, if achieved, should enable the Economic and Social Council to better develop useful and meaningful guidelines for United Nations activities in the economic and social areas.

Turning to reform of the Secretariat, we welcome the many ideas for such reform, in particular proposals that would contribute to the reallocation of existing resources. The reallocation of existing resources should be respected as a guide in any review within the Secretariat, with a view to making the best use of limited resources in meeting new tasks and responsibilities. The proposed review of old mandates is welcome. On the question of staffing, the need to refresh and realign the staff to meet current needs is warranted, and we would like to continue consultations with the Secretariat on how best such reallocation can be implemented, in principle within existing resources.

Furthermore, we support the strengthening of the authority of the Secretary-General in implementing reform, and welcome efforts to improve the transparency and accountability of the Secretariat. We look forward to further constructive discussions in this regard.

These plenary meetings mark the beginning of an earnest preparatory process for the September summit. In conclusion, I would like to quote from the statement made by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi during the general debate in September. He said:

> "The time has come to make a historic decision to reform the United Nations, and the Security Council in particular.
>
> "Time is limited. Our future — the future of the United Nations — is at stake. I would like to call upon the members of this body to work together and take a bold step towards the creation of a new United Nations for the new era." (*A/59/PV.4, p. 33*)

Japan will spare no effort in working with other Member States to achieve that end.

Mr. Dapkiunas (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): I would like first of all to offer our condolences on the passing of His Holiness Pope John Paul II and of His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III of Monaco.

The United Nations is not merely on the verge of reform — it is already in the process of reform. I would like to take a slightly different approach to making my statement. The delegation of Belarus supports the timetable and structure for our general work and for making critical decisions that you, Mr. President, have proposed, with a view to giving the United Nations a new image. We welcome your initiative, your foresight and your sincere determination to make this crucial process truly open and fair.

My delegation has taken to heart your appeal for us to work as professionally as possible by making brief statements and introducing concrete proposals. The vision of the delegation of Belarus with regard to a number of important national priorities in the context of United Nations reform is set out in a written statement, which will be made available to delegations. Additional material contained in the annex to that statement sets out the position of Belarus on the expansion of the Security Council.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.